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THE LAG IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF APICULTURE IN THE USSR

Pchelovodstvo
Moscow, Oct 1953

In the solution of the task established by the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in accordance with the decision adopted on 7 September 1953, apiculture should play a large role. This is a highly profitable branch of agriculture, and with a small expenditure of money and labor apiaries yield a high financial return. The Kolkhoz imeni Suvorov, Kuybyshevskiy Rayon, Zaporozhskaya Oblast, for example, received a return from bee culture of 206,000 rubles from an original investment of 15,000 rubles. The "Stroyka" Kolkhoz, Verkhne-Mullinskiy Rayon, Molotovskaya Oblast, gained 71,509 rubles from apiculture from an expenditure of 1,940 working days. The total income of the kolkhozes of the Nevinnomysskiy Rayon, Stavropol'skiy Kray, from apiculture amounted to more than 1,200,000 rubles. In the Kolkhoz imeni Voroshilov of the same rayon the beehive has yielded an income from honey and wax of 400,000 rubles. Large yields also were obtained by the kolkhozes of the Far East, Siberia, the Altay, the Caucasus, and the central oblasts.

In Orlovskaya Oblast, for example, many of the kolkhozes possess high-producing beehives. The "Krasnaya Zvezda" Kolkhoz, Kirsanovskiy Rayon, obtained from honey production 18,000 rubles in 1951, 49,000 rubles in 1952, and no less is expected for this year. The "1 Maya" Kolkhoz, of this rayon, the Kolkhoz "13aya Godovshchina Oktyabrya," Nikol'skiy Rayon, and many others sold their honey for from 15,000 to 20,000 rubles.

But at the same time in many oblasts the development of apiculture is lagging. Thus, in Orlovskaya Oblast at the beginning of this year, the number of swarms totaled only 37 percent of the prewar level. Five hundred and twenty-nine of the kolkhozes still have not acquired beehives. In many of the kolkhozes there are only small apiaries with five to ten swarms. For such apiaries the labor of the kolkhoz beekeepers is irrationally utilized; the apiaries are poorly supervised and even operate at a loss.

Kolkhoz apiculture in Moldavia, Belorussia, and Leningradskaya, Pskovskaya, Novgorodskaya, and other oblasts is being developed at a completely unsatisfactory rate. In recent years the number of swarms in kolkhozes of the Tatarskiy, Mordovskiy, and Mariyskiy ASSRs, and of Tambovskaya and other oblasts, has decreased. Kolkhoz apiculture in Kirovskaya Oblast is at present only half of the prewar level, in Tul'skaya Oblast one quarter, and in Yaroslavskaya Oblast one sixth.

This year in one of the rayons of the Vologodskaya Oblast, the plan for development of apiculture has not been fulfilled, and in rayons such as Ozer'skiy, Sokol'skiy, Syamzhenskiy, Nyuksenskiy, the number of swarms has been reduced by from 40 to 50 percent. In the winter of 1952-1953, more than 2,000 swarms were lost as a result of inadequate attention.

The plan for development of apiculture in Novgorodskaya Oblast has been less than 50 percent fulfilled. More than half the kolkhozes of the oblast have no apiaries, and in 125 kolkhozes the apiaries consist of from two to five swarms. During the entire postwar period, apiculture here has been increased a total of only 3,000 hives.

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Apiculture in Ivanovskaya Oblast is in an unsatisfactory status. In Yaroslavskaya, Kostromskaya, and other oblasts, tons of sugar are expended every year in feeding bees. In many kolkhozes and rayons apiculture is neglected.

In Borzhomskiy Rayon, Georgian SSR, all elements for the successful development of apiculture exist. Not so long ago the hives here yielded a large amount of honey and a considerable money profit. Managers of the kolkhozes and rayon organizations, however, have stopped paying attention to this branch of agriculture, and apiculture has declined. The apiary of the kolkhoz of the village of Didi-Mitarbi yielded a profit in the past, but now it has become unprofitable. In the kolkhoz apiaries of the villages of Balanti, Gudzhareti, Chibiskhavi, Dviri, Zapavi, and others, plans for the development of apiculture were not fulfilled, the number of swarms was reduced, and the marketability of the honey is low.

The apiary of the Kolkhoz imeni Shaumyan, Kizlyar, Groznenskaya Oblast, consists of 90 swarms. From such an apiary it is possible to obtain hundreds of kilograms of honey and wax and to make tens of thousands of rubles of profit. But the chairman of the kolkhoz does not take this large apiary to a place which has an abundant growth of nectar-bearing plants. As a result, instead of a profit, the apiary is an expense; the bees not only do not give honey, but also require sugar.

The functioning of the apiary of the "Novyy Put'" Agricultural Artel, Saranskiy Rayon, Mordovskaya ASSR, is left to chance. Here there are not even containers for the overflow of honey, and as a result, tens of poods of honey are lost. Twelve tons of honey were obtained this year from apiaries at the "Krasnoye Znamya" Kolkhoz, Tisul'skiy Rayon, Kemerovskaya Oblast, but here, too, because of lack of containers the apiarists have stopped drawing off honey and are behind in deliveries by at least 100 poods.

Over a period of time "Ufimskiy Aromatic Honey," or "Med-Lipets," as it is commonly known, has built up a deserved reputation. Ufimskiy honey could be bought in all large cities either in bulk, in colorfully ornamented wooden boxes of various capacities, or in neat tin containers. The honey could be bought either in liquid or in comb form. Now it is difficult to buy Ufimskiy honey even in Ufa.

It is evident that many Bashkir apiarists are masters of their art; they prove it by their work. In many kolkhozes of Bashkir, however, apiculture has been poorly established; poorly trained people are working in the apiaries, and the productivity of the swarms is low. The Ministry of Agriculture and Procurement USSR and its Office of Apiculture are inadequately directing kolkhoz apiculture. As a result, in 1940 in the kolkhoz apiaries 240,000 swarms were counted in 1945, 200,000; and in 1953 there were only 175,000.

The most important reason for the lag in apiculture is its unsatisfactory direction by the Ministry of Agriculture and Procurement USSR and the local agricultural organizations.

The Division of Apiculture of the Ministry of Agriculture and Procurement USSR during the 8 years of its existence has been unable to come to a decision on a single serious and important problem concerning the development of apiculture. The production of stock and artificial wax for the apiary moves along of its own accord, the manufacture of hives is not completely set up, and cadres of even average abilities are trained haphazardly. For 5 years this division has tried to solve the problems of proper organization and remuneration of labor in the kolkhoz apiaries without result. Little enthusiasm is being

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given the study and performance of experiments, adequate measures for the enlargement of small apiaries are not being taken, production of hives has not been set up, construction of winter huts (zimovnik) has not been organized (as a result of which there is a large winter loss of bee swarms annually), required measures for prevention of sickness of the bees are not taken, and breeding operations have not been set up. It is not by chance that during the last 3 years kolkhoz bee culture has not increased and the gathering of honey and wax has dropped. Measures should be taken immediately to alleviate these problems and steps should be taken to improve the situation.

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